

Dental Implants at Core Dental Southbank

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Description:

Dental Implants at Core Dental Southbank **Category:** Dental Implants **Target Word Count:** 2,500 words --- ## Replace Missing Teeth with Dental Implants Losing a tooth affects more than your ...

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Replace Missing Teeth with Dental Implants

Losing a tooth affects more than your appearance. It changes how you eat, how you speak, and over time, it changes the structure of your jaw and the position of your remaining teeth. A gap in your smile may seem like a cosmetic issue, but beneath the surface, bone loss begins within months of a tooth being lost, and neighbouring teeth start to drift into the space.

Dental implants are the closest thing modern dentistry has to regrowing a natural tooth. They replace the root as well as the crown, preserving jawbone, maintaining the alignment of surrounding teeth, and restoring function that feels entirely natural.

At Core Dental Southbank, we provide comprehensive implant consultations, treatment planning and restorative work. For the surgical placement of implants, we refer to experienced oral surgeons and specialist prosthodontists at the Collins Street Specialist Centre at the Manchester Unity Building — giving you access to advanced surgical expertise within the Smile Solutions group.

What Are Dental Implants?

A dental implant is a small titanium post that's surgically placed into the jawbone, where it acts as an artificial tooth root. Over a period of weeks to months, the implant integrates with the surrounding bone through a process called osseointegration — the bone literally fuses to the implant surface, creating a stable, permanent foundation.

Once the implant has integrated, a connector piece called an abutment is attached, and a custom-made dental crown, bridge or denture is secured on top. The result is a replacement tooth (or teeth) that looks, feels and functions like the real thing. Unlike dentures, implants don't move or shift. Unlike bridges, they don't require modification of neighbouring teeth. They're the closest modern dentistry can get to giving you your natural tooth back.

The Components of a Dental Implant

1. **The implant (fixture)** — A small titanium screw placed into the jawbone. Titanium is biocompatible, meaning the body accepts it without rejection, and it has the unique ability to fuse with living bone.

2. ****The abutment**** — A connector piece that sits on top of the implant and supports the final restoration. It's typically made from titanium or zirconia.

3. ****The restoration (crown, bridge or denture)**** — The visible part that replaces the missing tooth or teeth. This is custom-made to match the colour, shape and size of your natural teeth.

Who Is a Candidate for Dental Implants?

Most adults with one or more missing teeth are potential candidates for dental implants. However, successful implant treatment requires certain conditions:

Good General Health

Dental implant surgery is a minor surgical procedure performed under local anaesthesia (sometimes with sedation). You need to be in reasonable general health to heal properly. Certain medical conditions and medications may need to be managed or reviewed before implant placement.

Adequate Jawbone

Implants need a sufficient volume and density of jawbone to anchor securely. If you've been missing a tooth for a long time, or if bone loss has occurred due to gum disease, you may need a bone grafting procedure before implants can be placed. This is assessed during your consultation using X-rays and, in some cases, 3D cone beam CT scans.

Healthy Gums

Active gum disease must be treated before implants can be placed. Periodontitis — advanced gum disease that destroys the bone around teeth — will also destroy bone around implants if it's not controlled first.

Non-Smokers or Willing to Quit

Smoking significantly increases the risk of implant failure. It impairs blood flow to the gums and bone, slows healing, and increases the risk of infection. If you smoke, your dentist will discuss this with you and strongly recommend quitting before implant treatment.

Factors That May Require Additional Assessment

- Uncontrolled diabetes - Immune system conditions - Medications that affect bone metabolism (such as bisphosphonates) - Previous radiation therapy to the head or neck - Heavy teeth grinding (bruxism)

None of these automatically rule out implants, but they require careful evaluation and may influence the treatment plan.

The Dental Implant Process

Step 1: Consultation and Assessment at Core Dental Southbank

Your implant journey begins with a thorough consultation at our Southbank practice. Your dentist will:

- Examine the gap and surrounding teeth - Take digital X-rays and assess bone volume - Review your medical history and any relevant medications - Discuss your goals and expectations - Explain the implant process, timeline and costs - Determine whether any preparatory treatment is needed (such as gum disease treatment, extraction of a damaged tooth, or bone grafting)

Step 2: Referral for Surgical Placement

For the surgical phase of implant treatment, we refer to oral surgeons and specialist prosthodontists at the **Collins Street Specialist Centre** at the Manchester Unity Building. This ensures the implant is placed by a clinician with advanced surgical training and extensive experience in implant placement.

Your records, X-rays and treatment plan are shared directly with the specialist, so they have full context when you arrive. The Collins Street Specialist Centre is easily accessible from Southbank — a short walk or tram ride across the Yarra.

Step 3: Implant Surgery

The implant placement procedure is typically performed under local anaesthesia. Sedation options may be available for anxious patients or complex procedures.

During surgery:

1. A small incision is made in the gum to expose the jawbone. 2. A precise channel is drilled into the bone. 3. The titanium implant is placed into the channel. 4. The gum is closed over the implant (in some cases, a healing cap is placed that protrudes through the gum).

The procedure typically takes 30 to 60 minutes per implant. Most patients report that the procedure is less uncomfortable than they expected. Post-operative discomfort is typically mild, similar to that following a tooth extraction, and is well managed with over-the-counter pain relief and cold compresses.

Step 4: Osseointegration (Healing Period)

After placement, the implant needs time to integrate with the jawbone. This healing period — called osseointegration — typically takes **three to six months**, during which the bone grows around and fuses to the implant surface.

During this time: - You'll be given a temporary tooth replacement if the missing tooth is in a visible area - You can eat normally (with some care around the surgical site initially) - You'll attend follow-up appointments to monitor healing

Step 5: Abutment and Crown Placement

Once the implant has fully integrated, you'll return to Core Dental Southbank (or the specialist, depending on the treatment plan) for:

1. **Abutment placement** — The connector piece is attached to the implant. 2. **Impressions** — Digital or physical impressions are taken to fabricate your custom crown. 3. **Crown fitting** — Your permanent crown is fitted and adjusted for comfort, bite and appearance.

The final crown is made from high-quality dental ceramic or zirconia, colour-matched to your natural teeth. When complete, the implant crown should look and feel indistinguishable from a natural tooth.

Types of Implant Restorations

Single Tooth Implant

The most common implant scenario: one implant replaces one missing tooth. The implant supports a single crown, and no adjacent teeth need to be modified.

Implant-Supported Bridge

If you're missing two or more adjacent teeth, an implant-supported bridge may be the most efficient solution. Two implants are placed at either end of the gap, supporting a bridge that spans between them. This avoids the need for an implant at every tooth position and reduces cost.

Implant-Retained Dentures

For patients who are missing most or all of their teeth, implants can be used to anchor a full or partial denture, dramatically improving stability and comfort compared to conventional removable dentures. The denture clips or screws onto the implants, preventing the slipping and movement that many denture wearers find frustrating.

All-on-4 Implant Solutions

The All-on-4 concept uses just four strategically placed implants to support a full arch of fixed teeth (upper or lower). This approach:

- Can often be completed in a single day (teeth in a day) - May avoid the need for bone grafting, even in patients with some bone loss
- Provides a fixed, non-removable set of teeth
- Is a popular option for patients currently wearing full dentures who want a permanent solution

All-on-4 treatment involves specialist surgical planning and placement. We can discuss whether you may be a candidate and arrange a referral to the appropriate specialist at the Collins Street Specialist Centre.

Dental Implants vs Other Tooth Replacement Options

Implants vs Bridges

Traditional dental bridges require the teeth on either side of the gap to be filed down and crowned to support the bridge. This means modifying healthy teeth. Implants don't affect adjacent teeth at all — they stand independently in the jawbone.

Bridges also don't prevent bone loss in the gap, because there's no root replacement stimulating the bone. Implants do.

Implants vs Dentures

Removable dentures sit on the gum and rely on suction, adhesives or clasps to stay in place. Over time, as the jawbone resorbs (shrinks) due to the absence of tooth roots, dentures become looser and less comfortable, requiring relining or replacement.

Implants maintain jawbone volume by providing the mechanical stimulation that bone needs to stay healthy. They don't move, slip or require adhesives.

When a Bridge or Denture Might Be Preferred

Implants aren't always the best option for every patient or every situation:

- ****Cost**** — Implants represent a larger upfront investment than bridges or dentures, although their longevity often makes them more cost-effective over a lifetime.
- ****Healing time**** — The implant process takes months from start to finish, while bridges and dentures can be completed more quickly.
- ****Medical considerations**** — Some patients may not be suitable candidates for implant surgery due to medical conditions or insufficient bone.
- ****Patient preference**** — Some patients prefer non-surgical options, and that's entirely valid.

Your dentist at Core Dental Southbank will discuss all options with you, explain the pros and cons of each, and help you make an informed decision based on your individual circumstances.

How Much Do Dental Implants Cost?

The cost of dental implants varies depending on:

- The number of implants required - Whether bone grafting or other preparatory procedures are needed
- The type of restoration (single crown, bridge, denture or All-on-4) - Specialist surgical fees

Your dentist will provide a detailed, itemised treatment plan with clear costings before you commit to any treatment.

Making Implants Affordable

- **Health fund rebates** — Many private health funds provide rebates for dental implant components (particularly the crown). We process claims on-site via HICAPS.
- **Interest-free payment plans** — We offer **Payright** payment plans from 3 to 30 months, for treatments between \$1,000 and \$20,000, with no interest charges. This allows you to spread the cost of implant treatment into manageable instalments.
- **Preferred provider savings** — As preferred providers for **HCF, CBHS and NIB**, members may receive higher rebates.

Caring for Dental Implants

One of the great advantages of dental implants is that they're cared for just like natural teeth:

- **Brush twice daily** with a soft-bristled toothbrush - **Floss daily** around the implant crown, just as you would around a natural tooth - **Attend regular check-ups** at Core Dental Southbank — your dentist will monitor the implant, crown and surrounding gum tissue at each visit - **Avoid smoking** — smoking increases the risk of implant complications, including peri-implantitis (inflammation and bone loss around the implant) - **Wear a night splint** if you grind your teeth — your dentist can provide a custom-fitted occlusal splint to protect your implant and natural teeth

With proper care, dental implants can last a lifetime. The implant itself (the titanium post in the bone) is designed to be permanent. The crown on top may need replacement after 10 to 20 years due to normal wear, but this is a straightforward procedure that doesn't require any surgery.

The key to implant longevity is treating them like natural teeth: consistent daily cleaning, regular professional check-ups, and avoiding habits that put excessive stress on the restoration.

Why Core Dental Southbank for Dental Implants?

- **Comprehensive planning and restoration** — Your general dentist manages the entire treatment journey from initial consultation through to final crown placement and ongoing care.
- **Specialist surgical expertise** — Implant placement is performed by oral surgeons and specialist prosthodontists at the Collins Street Specialist Centre, ensuring the highest standard of surgical care.
- **Seamless referral pathway** — As part of the Smile Solutions group, the referral process is direct and streamlined. Your records travel with you.
- **Multilingual team** — Our dentists speak English, Cantonese, Mandarin and Farsi, ensuring clear communication about this important treatment decision.
- **Flexible payment options** — HICAPS, preferred provider savings, and interest-free Payright plans make implant treatment accessible.
- **Convenient Southbank location** — 55 City Road, steps from the Yarra River, close to public transport and within walking distance for Southbank residents.

Frequently Asked Questions

How long do dental implants last?

With proper care, the titanium implant can last a lifetime. The crown may need replacement after 10 to 20 years.

Is implant surgery painful?

The procedure is performed under local anaesthesia, so you won't feel pain during surgery. Post-operative discomfort is typically mild and manageable with over-the-counter pain relief. Most patients report less discomfort than expected.

How long does the whole process take?

From initial consultation to final crown placement, the process typically takes four to nine months, depending on healing time and whether preparatory procedures (like bone grafting) are needed.

Can I get implants if I've been missing teeth for a long time?

Yes, but you may need bone grafting if the jawbone has resorbed in the area of the missing tooth. Your dentist will assess this during your consultation.

Are dental implants covered by health insurance?

Many private health funds cover some implant-related costs (particularly the crown component). Coverage varies by fund and policy. Check with your fund or ask our reception team for guidance.

Book Your Implant Consultation

If you're missing one or more teeth and want to explore dental implants, book a consultation at Core Dental Southbank. We'll assess your situation, explain your options, and create a clear treatment plan.

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****Hours:**** Monday – Friday: 8:00 am – 6:00 pm Saturday: 8:00 am – 1:30 pm Sunday: Closed